

## Pastoral of the German Bishops Condemning Neo-Paganism

*Issued at the conclusion of the last Episcopal Conference at Fulda.  
The complete text as furnished by the N. C. W. C.  
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THE Holy Father has come to the aid of Catholic Christianity throughout the world with His Apostolic Constitution of April 2nd, this year, a Jubilee Year. These Jubilee Years stand as milestones across the wide, tedious space of the centuries since the life on earth of the Divine Love and of the Divine Mercy. In these, the Divine Love wishes to dispense more than ever Its grace, to open more than ever the spiritual treasures of the Holy Church, heaped up with the inestimable merits of Jesus Christ and His Saints. The external occasion for the indication of the Jubilee Holy Year has been given as the celebration of the nineteenth centenary of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ and of the solemn commemoration of all the facts which have become associated with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Golgotha; the institution of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, the First Communion of the Apostles and their sacerdotal consecration, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the instructions to the Apostles of being able to remit sins, the confirmation of the primacy of Peter, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the glorious beginning of the apostolic mission.

Such a centenary celebration, without doubt, was justifiably ordained by the Pope for the year 1933, and now extended to the year 1934. The premises for this celebration are facts which no other centenary celebration could boast: facts which, according to the words of Pius XI, take their beginning in the true regeneration of the world, the principle of all the blessings of Christian life and Christian civilization, of which we enjoy the ripened fruits. This is the profound significance of this Jubilee Year.

According to the intention of the Holy Father, the Holy Year ought to be a mission year for all Catholic Christians; that is, a year of serious, intimate recollection, of sincere abandonment of the life of imperfections, of defects,

of sins and of vices; a joyful return to the paternal heart of God. The Holy Year should extend its splendor and its celestial light over the shadowy night, over all the woes and griefs of our days, reminding us always of the august, luminous figure of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Saviour, and of His divine actions, the fundamentals for our salvation. Who can contemplate the death of Jesus Christ and the events intimately associated with it without being profoundly moved and filled with grateful love! They are acts by which Jesus Christ has been solidly constituted the center of all the world and at the same time the fount of the highest and purest joy and richest favor. All hearts still Catholicly conscious strongly rebel against the slightest hint that would cast doubt upon even one of these divine acts of salvation, or directly wish to renounce them.

In earnest deliberation of this thought, beloved people of our dioceses, you comprehend how sharp the pain and how distressing the sorrow caused your Bishops by the currents and agitations which have appeared in our Fatherland during the last year, which contravert the principal acts of Jesus Christ and the fundamental truths of the Catholic Church, and—not content with that—aim at the founding of a new religion and a German national church which they would found upon “a new faith,” so they say, the “racial myth.”

This new faith would have no more to do with “what is held to be true” which the eternally divine Truth has revealed to man, and Christ has authenticated with these words, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away” (Mark xiii, 31). This new faith is the invention of man, subject to human fallacy. With it is mingled no guarantee of revelation and therefore it is an arbitrary resignation to the fallacies of the human mind. Contrary to this, we proclaim all the greatness and profundity of divine revelation.

Sons of the Church of Christ, taught by the words of Christ, we believe in God, the one and true living God. Creator and Lord of Heaven and of earth. This God is not a creation of the human mind as were the idols of the ancient pagans; He is not even a creation of the human spirit, born of blood and race, “formed and developed in man,” as say some modern representatives of a new paganism.

The God of Christianity is the "Spirit omnipotent, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intellect and will and in every perfection; the only Spirit absolutely pure and immutable, really and essentially apart from the world; in Himself and by Himself infinitely blessed and inexpressibly superior to all that exist or may be conceived save in Him" (Vatican Council). By our Baptismal vow we are pledged to believe in this supernatural, eternal God, who stands as Creator at the beginning of our existence and who has marked as its eternal object, blessed communion with Him. This faith alone is the way of salvation. Of this faith it was written: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Mark xvi, 16).

By our Baptismal vow we are pledged to believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God Incarnate, our Lord, who for love of us and for our salvation suffered and died on the Cross for the redemption of sin and evil; Christ, whose glorious resurrection promised victory over death and hell; Christ, who shall return one day to judge the living and the dead.

Today there are abroad in our Fatherland false prophets who deny the divinity of Christ and teach in another way from that in which Christ taught by word and example; He who alone could say of Himself: "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me" (John xiv, 6). These false prophets repudiate the moral law of Jesus Christ; the Ten Commandments, of which Christ said: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. xix, 17). They set aside under the pretext that they are only the expression of what was the moral code of the Jewish people and must be interpreted otherwise for other people of other blood. With arrogance, these new prophets would eradicate from the human race the old consciousness of guilt concerning which such strong and clear expression has been found among the ancient pagans, even our own pagan ancestors, in sacrificial offerings.

Nevertheless Christ, the Man-God, died on the cross to expiate original sin and to give reparation for the sins of men. He is sacrificed daily in the species of bread on our altars, to apply to us the fruits of His death of expiation. The neo-pagans, instead, speak of "self-redemption" and want to know nothing of the "Lamb of God, who taketh

away the sin of the world?" (John i, 29). They repudiate the holy Sacraments, although these, through their institution by Jesus Christ, have become the transmitters of divine grace, and they wish to substitute for the founts of the grace of Christ, a supposed "mystery of Nordic blood" which has "overcome the ancient sacraments." Instead, we profess, together with our Christian progenitors, that we, as all descendants of Adam, are not free from sin. "But God (who is rich in mercy) for His exceeding charity where-with He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ (by whose grace you are saved)" (Eph. ii, 3-5).

As baptized Christians, we are pledged to believe in the Holy Ghost and in the Holy Catholic Church. The third divine Person, the "Spirit of Truth" (John xiv, 17), speaks through the sacred books of the Old and of the New Testaments, which we, as all the Christians in preceding centuries, hold in honor as the "Sacred Scriptures" and the word of God. These books, although relating honestly the weakness and passions of the human heart, are all "written for our learning; that through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures, we might have hope" (Romans xv, 4). For right intelligence and for the correct interpretation of Sacred Scripture, Christ has promised to the head of the Church the assistance of the Holy Ghost forever (John xiv, 16).

For all peoples and for all times Jesus Christ has founded His Church, for He "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. ii, 4); and Christ gave to His Apostles the command: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

It is rebellion against Christ, "the Saviour of the World," when the neo-pagans promote another church, "a German National Church," with an alleged "racial dogma and morality," and when a false regeneration by racial requirements is introduced in the place of the holy liturgy of the Universal Church. Certainly the Catholic Church respects and esteems individuality and the distinct value of

separate nations and races, and in our nation has even made use of primitive and racial usages and customs, purified of superstition, in the service of Christian truth. Thus she has ennobled worthwhile customs and exalted them in the service of the supernatural destiny of man.

On the other hand, it would be a pernicious regression and a negation of the better traditions of our German race if now, despising the august mysteries of Christianity, disowning the blessing of Christian civilization, we should return to the pagan deification of nature, to the worship of the forces of nature as the representatives of the neo-pagan idea are demanding.

Those who offer us a national church wish to break away from Rome, from the rock of Peter, on which it is true that Christ, the Son of God, has built His world Church; they wish to separate us from that Church which according to the words of St. Paul "is the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. iii, 15).

If, however, as these neo-pagans assert, blood and race are to be the basis and the determining forces of faith and religion in any nation, then would the State, as the collective force of the nation, advance to the position of community of faith, even to the position of the Church. Then would it be justifiable to comprehend its claim to totality in the sense that it lays claim to the complete mastery of all human relations so that every right of individual personality, every right of the family and all human society would be subjected incessantly to its domination.

It is thus that this neo-pagan doctrine—you know it well, Dearly Beloved, and you have often, in your grief, consulted your pastors about it—is an absolute negation of Christianity in all its doctrines and morals, its plenitude of grace. It is an attack against the Christian civilization of a thousand years built up by the best of our race. On the basis that it is foreign to our race, they would expel the Catholic Church, the holy spouse of Christ, "which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx, 28), from the German land in which it has been so long established, sustained by the faith and love of our forefathers! This neo-pagan doctrine even threatens to reduce to nullity the solemnly proclaimed desire of the Government of the Reich, when its Head, at a memorable hour in its history, declared

that the doctrines of Christianity must remain untouched and must constitute the basis for the reconstruction of the Germanic Reich.

Solemnly, as those whom God has commanded to be teachers and shepherds of Christian Catholics in Germany, we Bishops unanimously lift our voices and protest against the spreading of neo-pagan heresies in our Fatherland, protest against all attacks and insinuations being made by their followers against God, against Christ and His Holy Church, almost daily in written and spoken word.

Intimately united with the faithful entrusted to us, out of love of the Church and love for our people and Fatherland, we protest with the greatest energy against such a work as the demolition, by prejudice, of Christianity and the Church; and also because it is a deliberate attempt against the often-avowed intentions of the Government of the Reich, and if successful would annihilate any hope of a secure existence for our State and a happy future for our suffering people. The authority of the State needs must collapse when no longer founded on the authority of God, "for there is no power but from God" (Romans xiii, 1), and therefore only when it is in conformity with the will of God may it lay claim to obedience "for conscience' sake." If faith in God and fear of God disappear from human society, if the authority of God, which binds the conscience, becomes despised, the power of authority becomes an arbitrary, human, tolerated evil, and obedience becomes an apparent service attributed to servile fear. Then all the doors to rebellion and anarchy are open and the security of any order is constantly jeopardized.

When such dangers impend, we Bishops cannot remain silent. Sufficient to us is the admonition of the Apostle: "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. I know that, after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch!" (Acts xx, 28-31).

This duty of vigilance does not permit of silence. We must speak most resolutely concerning these "perverse

things" which allure to defection from Christ and the acceptance of a "new faith" masquerading in ambiguous seduction by the use of sacred words and even wheedling with the promise of definitely uniting the German people in a so-called "religion of the future adapted to the race."

While similar cajoleries are being spread about in the wider ranks of our people, grave dangers are advancing more especially in the ranks of youth. In newspapers, magazines and pamphlets, by word and by picture, the Church and her ministers are publicly assailed and ridiculed; Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, is mocked; God's infinite majesty offended.

Nor can we keep silent when a book, extremely radical in form, which makes use of innumerable disfigurements and seeks to undermine Faith in God, and the Christian religion and respect for the authority of Christ and the Church, is spread freely in the schools, among the teaching personnel, in the "courses for leaders" and in the employment camps, and which it is wished to make the basis of a new conception of the world, of a new code of ethics intended for an entire nation. When such writings are publicly recommended and an attempt is made to force them upon the faithful, we in the fulfillment of our watchful duty must proclaim loudly that this is a grievous sin and that, consequently, it is forbidden to read these writings which attack Christianity and undermine the foundations of Christian religion and morality. We cannot remain silent when we observe that not only individuals but even officials are found among the supporters and propagators of neo-pagan ideas and that they have at their disposal vast influence and great powers.

And now we pass to another picture. While paganism is spreading its petulant propaganda, our Catholic Press no longer has the freedom to discuss the great problems of these times in the light of Catholic doctrine on faith and morals, or to parry assaults upon Christianity and the Church.

Sunday, the day of God and of the family, has become so filled with routine celebrations and excursions ordained by organizations recognized by the State, that no time is left for devotional participation in divine services and for the fostering of Christian family life. Narrow regulations hamper the work of our Catholic organizations and societies

in the service of Church and Fatherland. In many localities Catholic youths are being persecuted for nothing more than giving public evidence of their faith in Christ and loyalty to the Church societies, protection for which was solemnly assured by the State. We, responsible shepherds of the flocks of Christ, cannot keep silent when we see even those in influential circles disregarding all the regulations and assurances of the Government, and attempting to set aside and destroy the Christian Faith, the Christian life among our people.

We are only fulfilling our pastoral duty if, vigilant, we lift up our voices in admonishment against the seducers and the heresy which threatens destruction to the salvation of souls entrusted to us and the true happiness of our people.

Beloved people of our dioceses! To speak with all clearness, we Bishops will not fail to place you on guard against certain phrases coined so that they may cause confusion in your faith or aggravate your conscience.

You have heard and have read that dogmas are of human manufacture. To the contrary, we, your Bishops, say to you: Dogmas, the axioms of faith, are thoughts from God, the laws of God, which the teaching of the Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, has derived from the revelations of God and has declared are to be believed. Dogmas, therefore, are not of human fashioning.

You have heard and read that when one dons the uniforms, one ceases to be Catholic or Protestant. To this proposition we, your Bishops, say that even though one must practice in the service what good comradeship and mutual consideration demand, religious conviction is not a coat, to be peeled off during service hours and hung on a nail. Religion is the soul of our souls, it is a sacred duty in all places and at all times; religion, even in professional service and in the service of one's country, is a source of strength and a most precious element of moral personality. Do not let yourselves be seduced by superficial phrases in the foolish belief that in the service one is any less Catholic.

You have heard and read that one can believe in a positive Christianity without believing in Christ, the Son of the living God, or in the Gospels. But we, your Bishops, say to you that there is a positive Christianity only when one does believe in Christ, the Son of God made Man, the Redeemer



of the world and accepts His Gospels in their entirety and observes all His commandments. Any other sort of Christianity is not a positive Christianity. Positive Christianity is faith in revelation which does not come from "flesh and blood" but from the "Father who is in heaven" (Matt. xvi, 17).

You have heard and read that what is useful to the people is moral. Henceforth those things are moral which conform to the postulates, the aims and the prosperity of the race. But we, your Bishops, tell you that morality is that which conforms to the will and commandments of God which, indeed, even more than the natural law, are found written on the tables of the human heart (Rom. ii, 65) or contained in the Holy Scripture as truly revealed, or proclaimed through Christ's care in the teaching of the Church, depository of this revelation.

This moral law is the source of blessings for the people. The faithful observance of the Fourth and the Sixth Commandments of God, for example, preserves the hereditary health of the family. The faithful observance of the Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments establishes the social life of the people under the beneficent influence of brotherly love, of justice and of truth. The faithful observance of the marriage laws of the Church will arrest the slow death of the race and will be the best eugenics for the conservation of the purity of the blood.

You have heard and read that it is licit to take an oath of unconditioned surrender. We, your Bishops, deem it prudent to observe with respect to this: An oath is a solemn invocation of God, and can never be obligatory for a service which would be contrary to a commandment of God. With an oath, such as that of the functionary or the soldier, one may pledge faithful work in one's profession and in obedience to legitimate superiors. But if an order from a superior should direct something which would be contrary to the commandments of God and to one's own conscience, the decisions pronounced by the Episcopal Conference of Fulda in November, 1919, in a solemn declaration of rights reserved with respect to the Weimar Constitution, are valid: "In that which concerns the oath required by the Constitution, it must be understood that Catholics cannot consider themselves bound to anything which would be contrary to

the law of God or of the Church and, consequently, to their conscience."

You have heard and read that Christianity constituted for our Germanic ancestors a misfortune and a corruption of the race. But we, your Bishops, tell you: The introduction of Christianity among the Germans was a most precious gift from heaven, a grace of God, for which we, assembled at the tomb of St. Boniface, can never sufficiently thank God. Christianity has ennobled the naturally good dispositions of our forefathers, has consecrated the historic mission of the German people in the Occident, and has formed the basis of that Christian civilization which remains the greatest glory of the German people for all times. With the apostasy of Christianity, the German people would abjure their past and inter their future. May the omnipotent and beneficent God not permit that the candlestick of revelation be removed from our country (Apoc. ii, 5).

Dear people of our dioceses! It may be said, as it has been said already, that the intervention of the Bishops in favor of the faith of our fathers, that their admonishments against the heresy of the new paganism and against the phrases of its representatives, signifies an *unwarranted "interference in the political sphere."* Conscious of our religious mission and of the duties of our sacred ministry, we repel this false interpretation of our actions. It is not politics to announce and to defend faith in God as the fundamental of any terrestrial order. It is not politics to recognize in Jesus Christ the Redeemer of the world. It is not politics to defend the eternal moral laws of humanity, the holy Ten Commandments of God and the legal order willed by God.

It is not politics to repel the aberrations of a pagan concept of honor and to remind that the duel and the *Mensur* (students' duel) are prohibited by the laws of God and of the Church. It is not politics to be concerned through Christian charity about those who, without proper personal offense, in consequence of the change of circumstances of the times, have fallen into misery and poverty, and also frequently have been unjustly damaged as to their honor and good name. It is not politics to demand a field for and the possibility of a truly Christian training and education for various social classes, especially for youth.

All that we demand is respect for the rights of God and full liberty for the Church of Christ to transmit to men, in conformity with her divine mandate, the treasures of salvation through the Redemption: truth, morality and grace; and also the liberty of employing for this purpose the necessary means in keeping with the times. That which we reject and condemn is this neo-pagan mentality which strives to shatter the millenary history of our people and threatens future ruin. We are conscious of the fact that we are only performing our duty as custodians of the religious patrimony of our forefathers and of Germans, when we champion the faith of God as the basis of every true authority and point to Christian morality as the safe guaranty of a happy national and social community life.

We reject as falsehoods oral or written statements that the Catholic Bishops are the representatives of terrestrial interests and susceptible to political aspirations. We deplore all such insinuations which are intended to undermine the position of ecclesiastical authority willed by God, and which have with impunity offended in the most infamous manner and insulted in public a German Cardinal, a Prince of the Church, who has merited much in the fields of religion and morality in Germany.

In the name of the Catholic people we deplore that the curators of souls, our priests, have been calumniated and insulted and their pastoral activity placed under suspicious control. Members of the German clergy who have been oppressed in this manner and subjected to violence because of their obedience to the Church and their loyalty to their sacred office, may be assured that every unjust attack and every suffering to which they have been subjected, increases the love of their Bishops and the fidelity of the Catholic people to them.

Finally, we equally deplore that our Catholic associations are suspected of being secret political organizations. In ecclesiastically recognized Catholic associations, we teach those who are members to serve God in conformity with their state in life, to sanctify their professions and to live practical Christian lives. In our work for Catholic youth, we educate the minds of our young people, male and female, so that they may become useful and faithful members of Church and State. We know that our valorous

youths neither seek nor obtain anything else from, and that this alone is the scope of, the social life of our youth societies, either in church or outside of church. The World War is the proof that our Catholic young men with enthusiasm and with the religious spirit of sacrifice even offer their lives for the welfare of their country.

Dear people of our dioceses! We hailed with joy last year the declaration of the Government of the Reich that it had the intention and the firm will of respecting and protecting the rights and the liberty of the Church. With fervid love for our German nation, with sincere applause for the measures of the Government against the propagation of atheism and public immorality, with faith in the intention of the Government to make of the strength of Christianity the basic supports of the new order of the nation, we were and we are ready to employ the full activity of the Church—which was guaranteed—for the salvation of the individual and for the true felicity of our people. Today we turn to you and to all our fellow Germans with an invitation to defend the hereditary faith in God, to defend Christian morality, to reject the neo-pagan movement which, in the same manner as Communist propaganda for atheism, wishes to wrest the people from God, from Christ, from the Church of Christ. All this, let us repeat, is not politics, but is collaboration gladly offered for the welfare of the people and even collaboration in the effort of the Government of the Reich to construct the new edifice of our national life on the fundamentals of Christianity. To this collaboration we are obligated by our ministry, to this collaboration we are impelled by the love in our hearts for our country and our people.

Dear people of our dioceses! Behold how in another crisis we have expressed with frankness and courage the dolorous preoccupations which oppress us in the face of these open attacks of neo-paganism against God and His truth, against Christ and the religion of the Cross, against the Church and her sacred mission to humanity. We have stressed the dangers which these attacks engender to the happiness and welfare of our nation. In doing so we have heeded the admonishment of the Apostle St. Paul, who wrote to his disciple Timothy, Bishop of Ephesus: "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, en-

treat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. But be thou vigilant, labor in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry" (II Tim. iv, 2-5). This was appointed our sacred duty. Therefore hear us as we call upon German Catholics in this grave hour!

Remain faithful to the religion of your fathers! Be assured that Jesus Christ, the Man-God and Redeemer of the World, assists His Church to whom this promise was given: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." For us also fidelity to the Church is an assurance of invincibility.

You parents, make use of your rights as parents toward your children; do not tolerate that they mingle in confidence with unbelievers, that they enter into associations and read books in which neo-paganism is preached and in which attacks are made against the Church and against authority. Be conscious of the fact that with you rests the responsibility for the religious and moral life of your children even when they are away from you on recreation or in service.

Catholic teachers, with the parents be ye the visible guardian angels of the children entrusted to you and remember well that some day you must render account to the omnipotent God of your mission as educators of children, the beloved of the Redeemer.

Persevere, O valorous men and women, in your societies blessed by the Church which strengthen you in the gladness of faith, reunite you in friendly fraternal love, direct you to a life faithful to your duties, and lead you ever anew to union with Christ at the Eucharistic table.

Catholic youth, be faithful to the banner of Christ, and if it is mocked or snatched from your hands, cultivate all the more fealty to Christ in your hearts. And, if they prevent your wearing publicly your uniform of Christ, in making your life valorous in purity and in fidelity to duty give always to the world a luminous sign that you are a faithful follower in the army of Jesus Christ.

To all of you, dearly beloved, we give this admonition: Persevere faithfully in the exercise of disinterested love of

neighbor. This is the sign of the recognition of disciples of Christ. This was the institution chosen by the Church in the days of the first Christian community at Jerusalem; this was the bud of the Church, until the Lord pronounced the beatific words of charity to all the disciples: "Come, ye blessed of My Father . . . as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. xxv, 34, 40).

Have confidence even though you must suffer and strive: "If God be for us, who is against us?" (Rom. viii, 31).

The Apostle has spoken these comforting words: "Casting all your care upon Him, for He hath care of you" (I Peter v, 7). Therefore we bring all our worries, for ourselves, for our dear youth, for all of our brothers in the faith, who are in danger of seduction and apostasy, we bring all of our pain to the Lord, yes, we wish it to the open wound in the Divine Heart of the Saviour. In Him, we feel secure; in this sacred spot of holy refuge, we pray and we trust with unwavering faith, that the currents of grace from the Redeemer shall bring to us and to our people all blessings and all safety, now, in the jubilee year of the Redemption, and in the future, a better future for Church and Fatherland.

May the omnipotent God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, bless you.

## The Kingdom of Christ

EUGENIO CARDINAL PACELLI

*Papal Secretary of State.*

*Sermon delivered by His Eminence, the Cardinal Legate, at the close of the International Eucharistic Congress held at Buenos Aires, October 14, 1934. Reprinted from The Standard (Dublin), November 2, 1934.*

**I**T is sad to have to admit that the world today is in many respects like the prætorium of Pilate. The voices of faithless multitudes reveal their apostacy and blackest ingratitude in the cry: "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke, xix, 14).

There is the voice of science, which in just punishment of its pride is delivered up to a reprobate sense (Rom. i, 28). There is the voice of anti-Christian political theory,

which, giving itself up to the pursuit of earthly goods, declares that that people is happy which possesses these goods, even if it know not God. There is the voice of subversive propaganda, which brings to our minds the wild cry of the rapacious wolves and seducers foretold in the Sermon on the Mount. There is the voice of the turbulent agitator, which recalls the memory: "Why have the Gentiles raged and the people devised vain things?" All these voices mingle together to produce one sacrilegious and blasphemous Bedlam.

However, we may console ourselves with the thought that in the new *prætorium* Jesus is not alone as He was in the *prætorium* of Pilate. By His side there are many fervent souls. There is also the Church. And the more wildly and fiercely the voice of impiety is raised against Him, with all the more ardor is He declared before heaven and earth to be the Immortal King of the Ages. In the present *prætorium* He wishes to be surrounded not by legions of angels, but by His Church, which, like an army in battle array, defends and glorifies Him, and proclaims Him king.

Our International Eucharistic Congress, spontaneous manifestation of the heart of the Church, wishes to be nothing more than a powerful cry, whose echoes will ring to the ends of the earth, proclaiming in sweeping victory the Kingship of Jesus Christ. Here love is concentrated, and from the depths of all hearts rise voices of reparation and of triumph, which seem to say: "No, Jesus will not now die amid the humiliations and sorrows of Calvary." Faith will conquer apostasy. We shall share the good fortune of the multitudes which of old accompanied Him on the day of His triumph. With His help we shall raise a throne for Him in every heart. We shall make Him loved by every soul, and by all the peoples of the earth.

The kingdom of Christ's love, a subject of which He never tired speaking, the unquenchable longing of His sacred heart, is primarily the interior kingdom to which He referred when He said: "The kingdom of God is within you." It is also the social kingdom expounded by Him in parables by the lakeside. Lastly, it is the glorious kingdom of eternal life. The frontiers of God's kingdom stretch out till they reach the source of divine love itself.

Christ's method of reigning in this kingdom of His corresponds to His love, and the reign of love differs from the reign of infinite power. To reign here is not a mere juridical concept summed up in the three terms of the definition of royal powers—to legislate, to judge, to administer. Rather it signifies to have subjects who accept with love the government of the King and to give to these subjects the enjoyment of the good things of the kingdom.

To reign is to live amidst the subjects, and for them by a government full of zeal, of providence and of goodness. To reign signifies taking pains that the kingdom may have all the means necessary for the attainment of its end. To reign means to see that the life of the kingdom corresponds to the ideal, to establish the life of the kingdom on unshakable foundations which assure it that tranquillity of order, that peace, which only the Eternal King can give.

If ever you have studied deeply all that the Gospels have to say about this kingdom, you will have found that your thoughts moved in a supernatural sphere, and you will have understood clearly that this reigning is the expression and the work of love. It would seem—pardon the boldness of the expression—that all the divine attributes which bear relation to the kingdom were turned into instruments of love.

What divine harmonies may not the soul discover in the kingdom of Christ when she knows what it is to reign and penetrate with a glance the vast horizons of the kingdom of His love! The heart buries itself therein, understanding well that, in imitation of the merchant of the Gospel in search of pearls, man should give all for the possession of this kingdom. She sees how some burning souls live for nothing else but to enlarge the confines of this divine kingdom.

Among these stupendous harmonies the Eucharist shines forth with such a resplendent light that in a Gospel phrase we may call it the "Sacrament of the Kingdom." In order to be convinced of this, it is sufficient to see how Christ's kingdom is realized in its three spheres and in the strictest sense of the word "reign."

In the inner life of the spirit two things constitute the Kingdom of Christ: submission to the Eternal King and participation in the goods of the kingdom. The soul



abandons itself to Jesus and Jesus opens to her His treasures. That this is the effect of the Blessed Eucharist on the soul is too clear to need proof. The Eucharist has been ordained by divine providence to quench concupiscence in the heart, to suppress impure motions and to kindle in us the flames of divine love. It is the mystic wine which brings forth virgins. It is the sacrament of love. With this double efficacy it brings us to such a sincere submission to Our King as to abandon ourselves wholly and unconditionally out of love, in a manner worthy of God.

Our share in the goods of the kingdom caused by the Eucharist is so complete that it should rather be called full possession, because by it we come to possess God, supreme good and source of all good in such a profound intimacy that Jesus can never give Himself more fully to us on earth. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist there is a give and take which may be expressed in the words of the *Canticle of Canticles*: My beloved to me and I to him. In the Eucharistic discourse at Capharnaum, Jesus affirmed it decisively: He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him (*John vi, 57*).

Let us turn now from the contemplation of the interior kingdom to consider the kingdom in its social aspect; that is to say, on the Church. There, too, we shall find that the Eucharist takes a leading part in translating that kingdom into reality. Not allowing ourselves to be carried away on the wings of poetry, to express as St. Ignatius Loyola would have done, the glories of this kingdom, we shall describe with precision and tranquillity the manner in which the Eucharist brings about the reign of Christ in the Church. We have already seen how It effects it in the soul, let us now see Its effects on the Church itself.

To the kingdom of God, considered from the social standpoint, belong the government of the kingdom, the furnishing of adequate means for the attainment of its ends and the social life communicated to it by the King. Of all the elements revealed to us by an analysis of the word "reign" these are the ones which correspond to the social aspect of the kingdom. Christ lives in His Church, governing her, enriching her with the social means suited to the attainment of her end. He communicates to her His own life.

To speak of Christ's active presence in the Church is to

recall the words: "Behold, I am with you all days." This is no mere honorary presence. It is the action of Jesus which illuminates, guides and gives life to His Church. Can we comment on these truths without our thoughts being directed spontaneously to the Blessed Eucharist? By means of the Blessed Eucharist Christ dwells among men and becomes a source of eternal life to the Church.

Christ governs the Church mysteriously from the Blessed Eucharist. Through It He supplies her with the means necessary for the attainment of her supernatural end. It is but natural then that He should have wished the Eucharist to be in a very deep sense the source of the collective and social life of the Church herself. The true doctrine of this social life was given by St. Paul in his teaching on the mystical body and by Our Lord Himself in the allegory of the vine.

When the Apostle wished to explain to his disciples of Ephesus the intimate nature of the social life of the Church, he expounded for them the metaphor of the mystical body. The Church being united to Jesus Christ receives from Him His own very life. What counts most in the Church is not the exterior life but the interior life which is hidden with Christ in God. The end for which Christ instituted the Church is not in order to give men a social life as in other human societies, but to give them a life of a higher—a divine order. This is effected by incorporation in Christ. The Eucharist is *par excellence* the sacrament of incorporation in Our Lord.

One of the Fathers of the Church says of It that through It we are made to be of the same flesh and of the same blood as Christ. The Eucharist is called the sacrament of unity. It seems to me that Our Divine Lord wished to stress the mysteries of ecclesiastical unity in the discourse and sacerdotal prayer of the Last Supper in order to insinuate that that unity has its origin in the Eucharistic mysteries.

From this brief analysis the realization of the social reign of the Redeemer through the Blessed Eucharist breaks on us in the dazzling splendor of all its truth. But if we take the Kingdom of God as a synonym for life eternal, it would seem at first that the Blessed Eucharist had no such close relations with it. The Eucharist is the bread of Elias, the provisions for the journey of the earthly wayfarer. Life eternal is at the end of the road. The Eucharist is a mystery of

faith, heaven is a mystery of beatific vision. The Eucharist is a mystery of humiliations, the life eternal is a mystery of eternal glorification.

But in this form of the Kingdom, also, the Eucharist plays its part and becomes the medium of Christ's kingship. Theologians, commenting on the words of St. John: "If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; he that eateth My flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life," teach that the Eucharist is the seed of resurrection and life everlasting; that is to say, the seed of God's kingdom in its final stage. Through It the virtue of faith is transformed into the life of vision. The traveler arrives home. Those who have been with Christ in His humiliation take part now in His never ending glory. We can go further.

The Eucharist is a foretaste of the heavenly life. St. Paul says that the faithful are already saved by hope in this life. He uses this expression rather than say that they have hopes of being saved in order to inculcate the doctrine that justice is, as it were, an anticipated possession of the eternal life. With all the more reason may we repeat this of the Eucharist, which in giving us Christ gives us all the goods of heaven. Death, the moment of transformation, will but tear aside the veil and show us clearly that which we already possessed, which in some measure we had seen by the light of faith.

We shall be with Him always in heaven because we were with Him on earth. O divine impatience of Jesus, Who by a series of prodigies has desired to make us possess life eternal already in time, and that we should carry hidden in our breasts the eternal flame of love during the sacred night of faith!

What peace and satisfaction does not the soul experience when with penetrating gaze it discovers the harmonies between the Kingdom of Christ and the Sacrament of His love. Everything is lit up by heavenly light, and all the mysteries of love hidden in the sacrament of the kingdom are called to mind. Even if the soul, faithful to the Augustinian formula, "Faith seeking reason," seeks to advance with slow and steady pace in the complexity of articles which together make up the faith, she feels, nevertheless, the touch of the spark which sets love aflame.

How could it be otherwise, when everywhere we encounter

the love of Christ? As a fire burning in a secret hearth we find it in the interior kingdom of the soul. Over the wide plains of the Church it appears as the vivifying-light of the Eucharistic sun. Rapt in heavenly visions, we see it as a mysterious flame. All is love. To reign is love. The Eucharist is love.

In the ways of Divine Providence, truth and love go hand in hand. Truth inflames love, and love illuminates truth. Penetrating to the very core of truth, souls are seized with the most ardent flames of love.

The Eucharistic kingdom of Jesus has left burning footprints in history—literature, art, great monuments, historic deeds, Eucharistic miracles mark its splendid progress. But all this is merely the luxuriant vegetation which covers the surface. The treasure itself is hidden and must be sought in the granite bowels of truth, whence it is released and bursts forth, the fire of love. By opening the rock of truth, the approach to love is laid bare to souls.

Once touched by love, one must be possessed entirely by it. The soul feels impatient until Christ sets up His Kingdom in her and longs to be able to say: "The Lord possessed me" (Prov. viii, 22). Such is the watchword of the kingdom. She burns with apostolic zeal for the extension of the Church's borders. Being subject to sweet agony she repeats: "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ," and at the same time she feels able to carry out all her generous resolves, trusting in love. "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me."

The love which God has placed in your hearts and which burns there so brightly will give you hope. Still more the love like fire drawn from the Blessed Eucharist will strengthen you. Christ will not now refuse the kingly scepter as He once did by the Lake of Genesareth, for we shall not offer Him a kingship which is not His. He will hear our prayers and hearken to our voices and He will reign in all souls, the whole world over . . . and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

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